

# SS Mary and John Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123213
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359395
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Dickinson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Petronella Spivey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pip Murray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Hertford Street Oxford OX4 3AJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors, subject coordinators, a key stage coordinator, the inclusion leader, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and talked to others informally. They observed the school's work, including a scrutiny of pupils' work in writing and mathematics, and looked at the school's evaluation of teaching and learning, its plan for future development, and the minutes of the joint steering group that oversees provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Questionnaires from 202 parents and carers were scrutinised. These included a very small minority from parents and carers of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- how successfully the school is raising attainment and identifying and addressing any underachievement, particularly for different groups of pupils
- the extent to which teaching across the school is promoting good learning and meeting pupils' differing needs
- how effectively leaders at all levels evaluate the school's performance, identify areas of relative weakness, and take appropriate and successful action to overcome them.

## Information about the school

SS Mary and John is larger than the average primary school. It is situated on two sites approximately half a mile apart and serves a diverse, multi-faith community. Many pupils speak English as an additional language, with over 20 different languages represented in the school. The largest group of pupils is White British and the second largest group in the school is of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. After-school care is provided at the school and this is managed by the governing body. The school has received several awards, including Eco School Silver and the International Schools Award.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in Comper Foundation Stage School. This is a separate school with its own headteacher. At the time of SS Mary and John's last inspection, similar arrangements were in place and the staff teaching these children were drawn from both schools. Almost all staff working with these children are employed by Comper Foundation Stage School but all the children in the Reception Year (called F1) are on the school roll of SS Mary and John. A steering group comprising governors and headteachers from both schools oversees provision for the F1 children but the governing body of SS Mary and John has overall responsibility for their provision and outcomes.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

SS Mary and John is a caring school that provides good support for pupils' personal, social and emotional well-being. However, pupils' academic achievement is inadequate. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics, but this masks significant variations between different groups of pupils. Pupils from White British backgrounds achieve satisfactorily. However, pupils from Pakistani families achieve significantly less well than their peers in school and when compared to Pakistani pupils nationally. There is wide variation in the quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, coupled with a lack of robust evaluation and monitoring of the pupils' learning and progress. Consequently, too many pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of Pakistani heritage, do not develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to succeed in the next stage of their education.

The school has some stronger aspects to its work. It is a school that knows its local community well, and pupils from different cultural backgrounds and faiths work and play happily together. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. Some effective international links have been developed to help pupils learn about places where lives, traditions and beliefs may contrast with their own. The partnership arrangement with Comper Foundation Stage School ensures children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start with their learning and development.

There are also pockets of good teaching in the school, but in Key Stages 1 and 2 the quality and pace of pupils' learning are too inconsistent. Some teachers use assessments and targets well, but this is not done effectively across the school. Teaching strategies and planned tasks lack a consistently sharp focus in taking account of the pupils' prior attainment and learning needs. This is particularly the case for pupils from Pakistani families. As a group, these pupils underachieve significantly in English and mathematics, and examples were seen during the inspection when they were not sufficiently drawn into and involved in lessons.

The headteacher and other members of the leadership team recognise that attainment and achievement should be better. Teachers are keen to identify where practice could be improved and to lead new initiatives themselves. However, this energy is not harnessed, managed or led effectively. As a result, their work has limited impact. Leaders at the highest level lack the strong ambition, drive and aspiration necessary to raise attainment and improve the school's overall effectiveness. A significant minority of parents and carers

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of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 submitted comments that were rightly critical of the impact of the senior leaders, the amount of progress their children were making and the fact that learning is too dependent upon the class in which pupils are placed.

Another key weakness in the leadership of the school is the quality and impact of monitoring and evaluation. Senior leaders judge the school to be more effective than it is, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching. This is because the procedures for checking its performance are not sufficiently robust and regular. There has been too little progress since the last inspection in addressing two out of the three areas that required improvement. The significant weaknesses in leadership mean that the school does not have the required capacity to improve.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership at the highest level by:
  - ? instilling strong and effective vision, drive and ambition and ensuring that these permeate the school's work across both sites to raise aspirations and expectations for pupils' academic achievements
  - ? ensuring that monitoring and evaluation are systematic, effective and accurate to bring about a strong and demonstrable impact on improving pupils' attainment and achievement.
- ? Raise attainment in English and mathematics to above average by the end of Year 6 and narrow the gap between the attainment of Pakistani pupils in school compared to this group nationally, by:
  - ? improving the learning and progress of Pakistani pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 ?
  - monitoring all pupils' progress more regularly and effectively to identify quickly any pupils who are underachieving and ensure they make accelerated progress ?
  - ensuring subject leaders in English and mathematics have a greater impact on improving outcomes, particularly for Pakistani pupils.
- ? Improve the consistency and effectiveness of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, by:
  - ? using the information from pupils' prior attainment and assessments more consistently and effectively to plan appropriate work
  - ? broadening the range of strategies used by all teachers to ensure a sharp focus on what pupils of differing abilities should and will learn in lessons
  - ? ensuring pupils from Pakistani families are fully included in lessons
  - ? implementing an effective system for monitoring the quality of teaching that draws upon a range of evidence and leads to improved learning.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>4</b>
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Pupils often have positive attitudes to learning and try hard in lessons. They listen well and most are well behaved. When pupils are given the opportunities to share their ideas with a partner or work on a task in a group, they cooperate well and make thoughtful contributions. Many pupils are very articulate and confident. In classes where teachers' marking gives the pupils clear guidance on what to focus on next, the pupils respond

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positively to the teachers' comments and this increases pupils' involvement in their learning. However, this is not consistent across both key stages. The main weakness in pupils' learning and progress is that some pupils are not as involved as others because the teaching does not include them sufficiently. Consequently, some groups tend to be passive and their learning is not secure. This is often the case for pupils from Pakistani families. Pupils feel safe and many enjoy participating in healthy activities. They work and play happily together and show tolerance and understanding of others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The very large majority report that they like school.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate due to significant variation in attainment and progress between different groups of pupils which has been too wide over the last three years. By the end of Year 6, the attainment of Pakistani pupils in English and mathematics has fallen behind that of Pakistani pupils nationally and is in sharp contrast to the above average attainment of White British pupils in the school. Inspectors' observation of pupils' learning shows that this trend continues. The weaknesses in teaching and in monitoring pupils' progress in learning also result in underachievement for other pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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## How effective is the provision?

There is too much variability in the quality of teaching, particularly the extent to which teaching challenges and motivates pupils and leads to good learning for all groups. The use and impact of teaching assistants are also inconsistent. Some teaching is effective, characterised by a good pace and a suitable range of strategies to engage all pupils and promote their learning. In English and mathematics lessons, teachers' plans usually indicate what pupils from different ability groups will learn but these are not consistently focused or specific. Tasks are sometimes limited in terms of the demands placed on pupils so the pace of their learning is too slow and they mark time. In mathematics lessons, for example, pupils carry on with the same work for too long, even though they find it easy. Pupils report they sometimes repeat the same work in mathematics, rather than being provided with extension work that has a greater level of complexity to build up their understanding. Pupils from Pakistani families are often more passive in lessons because the teaching does not involve them sufficiently. On occasions, they become marginalised to such an extent that their learning and progress falter making some of these lessons inadequate overall.

The school's international links, work with artists and after-school clubs are strengths within the curriculum. The school cares for and supports pupils effectively, and pupils report that they will turn to an adult in school if they need help. The care and guidance for pupils whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable are good and the school liaises well with a range of specialist support agencies in this respect. The after-school care is also good. Pupils enjoy the activities on offer and suitable arrangements are in place to enable pupils from families who may be encountering challenging times to attend.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The areas for improvement identified at the last inspection relating to raising attainment and the quality of teaching remain key areas for development for the school. The senior leaders are having a positive impact upon pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal and social development. They are effective in ensuring that pupils feel part of a cohesive cultural and multi-faith community. However, the senior leadership team's ambition and drive in relation to pupils' academic achievement is a significant weakness. It is not ensuring that all pupils have equal entitlement and opportunities in relation to their achievement. Leaders have good intentions and recognise this weakness, but their actions are either too recent to have made an impact or have not been sufficiently effective. The deputy headteacher has developed the school's use of data and the systems for tracking

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pupils' progress since the last inspection. In addition, the progress reviews held with teachers three times a year now identify those pupils who have not progressed. However, these systems are not yet having enough effect on reducing the degree of underachievement. The information is not used sufficiently well to focus teachers' planning or to inform their teaching, so that pupils who need to catch up make accelerated progress.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It ensures that staff training for safeguarding pupils is kept up to date and the arrangements in place comply well with current guidance. Good arrangements are in place to link with Comper Foundation Stage School and oversee the Early Years Foundation Stage provision for the children in F1. Over the last year, the governing body has strengthened its involvement in the school's self-evaluation and in monitoring the priorities the school has identified for improvement. The governing body has rightly become increasingly concerned about the underachievement of Pakistani pupils. However, its role in addressing this significant weakness has been hindered by the senior leaders' and School Improvement Partner's view that teaching in the school has been good, and also the lack of monitoring and robust analysis of pupils' learning and progress.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The children get a good start through the partnership arrangement with Comper Foundation Stage School and achieve well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Links between the headteachers of both schools and the governing body are well established and successful.

The learning environment is outstanding and well resourced. This makes the setting a very pleasant place for children to learn and explore. Teachers and adults work well as a team



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to ensure that approaches across the three classes are consistent. Adults relate well to the children, are supportive and encouraging, and have very good regard for children's welfare, enjoyment and safety. They sit with children at snack time and lunchtimes and promote talk and conversation successfully. There is a systematic approach to teaching children about the sounds that letters make to help them build words. On occasions, however, the guided teaching does not move at a fast enough pace for the more able children. Detailed records of children's learning and development are kept and these are well annotated, giving a good picture of children's achievement across the six main areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision for children in F1 is led and managed well by the headteacher of Comper Foundation Stage School.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned questionnaires was above average for a primary school. Although the completed questionnaires were mainly positive, many included comments that reflected significant concerns in three areas: the leadership and management of the school; the extent to which pupils' needs are met; and how well pupils make progress. These concerns reflected the inspection findings. Ninety-five parents with children in Key Stages 1 and 2 included written comments, either on the questionnaires or in a separate letter. Amongst these, comments that were wholly positive about aspects of the school's work were in the minority. These often related to the good attention to pupils' social and emotional well-being, the commitment and hard work of staff, or the quality of teaching in their child's class. The large majority of comments were predominantly critical and exemplified the three main areas of concern mentioned above.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at SS Mary and John CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 202 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 407 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	51	92	46	5	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	48	99	49	4	2	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	28	128	63	9	4	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	28	112	55	22	11	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	81	40	102	50	13	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	30	117	58	18	9	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	86	43	106	52	5	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	81	40	98	49	9	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	31	103	51	23	11	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	21	122	60	18	9	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	24	107	53	29	14	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	16	107	53	25	12	23	11
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	39	102	50	19	9	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of SS Mary and John Church of England Primary School,**

◆ Oxford OX4 3AJ

Thank you for giving us a warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very pleased to be able to talk to many of you and would particularly like to thank the groups of pupils who agreed to meet with an inspector.

Your headteacher and teachers work hard to make sure your school is a caring place, where you can learn in a safe and supportive environment. We were impressed by your efforts to get along well with each other. You also help to make the school a caring community. You are good at finding out about how other people live, not only in your local community but also through the international links that the school has with schools in other places in the world.

Although some of the work of the school is good, we have judged that your school needs 'special measures'. This is because there are some important areas that are not good enough. The school will get some extra support to help it to get better and inspectors will visit your school from time to time, to see how things are improving. We think that you are capable of reaching higher standards by the end of Year 6, particularly in English and mathematics and especially those pupils of Pakistani heritage. We have asked those responsible for leading and managing the school to look more carefully at the progress that you make and to ensure that more of your lessons are good so that you all make the progress of which you are capable.

We hope that you will all continue to work hard and tell your headteacher and the teachers when you notice that improvements are making a big difference to your learning and progress.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson Her Majesty's Inspector

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